

Property Line: Understanding Boundaries

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Understanding the exact boundary of a site is crucial for understanding and reacting to various issues at a property. An understanding of the property line is necessary for facility and landscape projects (e.g. is the fence on our property, is a sewer line or water line on our property, is the tree on our property or our abutters) but also for understanding where a neighbor's property line is located (e.g. is their lawn furniture on our land). Encroachment by a neighbor can be a major issue and long term use of Historic New England property can result in a claim of adverse possession.

GUIDELINES FOR UNDERSTANDING BOUNDARIES

- Research and document the boundaries of every property in the collection. Every property should have a certified boundary survey.
- Property corners should be marked with durable/permanent pins or stone monuments as laid by a surveyor.
- Maintain tax maps on file for each property in order to identify parcels and abutting neighbors. Copies of tax maps should be submitted to the Archives for the permanent file.
- Property bounds for every property should be walked at least once per year with a group ideally consisting of site manager, preservation manager and, if appropriate, landscape staff.
- Site staff and property care staff should monitor the potential sale of adjoining properties:
 - Special attention should be paid to sales of parcels that may have easement rights to portions of Historic New England property.
 - Notify the property care team leader of new owners and their parcels when sales take place to ensure accurate lists of abutters can be maintained.
- Any property line issues should be noted and brought to the attention of the property care team leader.